

## ***Close Reading Questions***

### **“Where Nothing Says Everything”**

#### **Key Ideas and Details**

##### **First Look: *What does it say?***

- (1) What is your first impression? Then, what is your second impression? Do they complement or contradict one another?
  - (2) Can you isolate any confusion? Are there any vocabulary words you don't know?
  - (3) What can you infer about the author?
  - (4) What is the main idea of this passage?
  - (5) Can you sum it up in a sentence?
- .....

#### **Craft and Structure**

##### **Second Look: *How does it work?***

- (1) Why does the author use the word “disaster” for the empty space?
  - (2) What is the effect of dashes in the final sentence?
  - (3) What imagery is used in the passage? Which details are specific and which ones are abstract?
  - (4) How is the order of sentence parts unusual in the third sentence?
  - (5) Does the author use any figurative language?
- .....

#### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

##### **Third Look: *What does it mean?***

- (1) How does this passage relate to the essay as a whole?
- (2) What is the author's purpose? Is there evidence in the text that supports it?
- (3) What is the tone of the essay? Is there an appeal to the reader's emotions? Thinking?
- (4) How is this author's view of Ground Zero different from other Americans? Compare to news stories you have seen.
- (5) Why do you think the author wrote this essay?

And there, at last, I got my ticket to the disaster.

I COULD see not just into the pit now, but also its access ramp, which trucks had been traveling up and down since I had arrived that morning. Gathered along the ramp were firefighters in their black helmets and black coats. Slowly they lined up, and it became clear that this was an honor guard, and that someone's remains were being carried up the ramp toward the open door of an ambulance.

Everyone in the dining room stopped eating. Several people stood up, whether out of respect or to see better, I don't know. For a moment, everything paused.

Then the day flowed back into itself. Soon I was outside once more, joining the tide of people washing around the site. Later, as I huddled with a little crowd on the viewing platform, watching people scrawl their names or write "God Bless America" on the plywood walls, it occurred to me that a form of repopulation was taking effect, with so many visitors to this place, thousands of visitors, all of us coming to see the wide emptiness where so many were lost. And by the act of our visiting -- whether we are motivated by curiosity or horror or reverence or grief or by something confusing that combines them all --that space fills up again.